

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2714
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
DIA WASHDC
SECDEF WASHDC
USCINCEUR
USIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR SY UR
SUBJ: SYRIAN MEDIA FOCUS ON ASAD TRIP TO MOSCOW

REF: DAMASCUS 2468

1. WITH APPROACH OF APRIL 18 TRIP TO MOSCOW BY PRES ASAD,
SYRIAN MEDIA HAVE FOCUSED ON IMPORTANCE OF SYRO-SOVIET
TIES. APRIL 16 PRESS REPORTED LENGTHY COMMENTARY BY NOVOSTI
HIGHLIGHTING SIGNIFICANCE OF ASAD VISIT. ACCORDING TO
LOCAL PRESS VERSION OF COMMENTARY, "SYRO-SOVIET COOPERATION
HAS BECOME MORE COMPREHENSIVE DURING PAST FEW YEARS. IT IS
PROMOTED IN GOVT., PARTY AND SOCIAL CHANNELS. IT ENCOMPASSES
POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND EVEN DEFENSE FIELD,

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SIGNIFICANCE OF LATTER ARISING FROM CIRCUMSTANCES OF CONTINUED
ISRAELI AGGRESSION. COORDINATION OF EFFORTS OF BOTH
COUNTRIES FOR ACHIEVING JUST PEACE OCCUPIES
PROMINENT POSITION IN SYRO-SOVIET RELATIONS, WITH SOVIET
UNION STRICTLY ADHERING TO PRINCIPLED STAND DEMANDING
ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM ALL TERRITORIES OCCUPIED IN 1967
AND GUARANTEE OF LEGITIMATE PALESTINIAN RIGHTS.

INCLUDING THEIR RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF INDEPENDENT NATIONAL STATE."

2. APRIL 17 PRESS BANNERED: "PRES ASAD VISITS MOSCOW TOMORROW AT HEAD OF PARTY AND GOVT DELEGATION. ASAD RECEIVES CONGRATULATORY CABLES ON EVACUATION DAY. BREZHNEV AND CARTER PRAISE SYRIA'S STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE." PRESS LED OFF WITH TEXT OF CABLE FROM BREZHNEV AND PODGORNY: "ON OCCASION OF SYRIAN NATIONAL DAY, DAY OF EVACUATION OF FOREIGN FORCES FROM SYRIAN LANDS, ON BEHALF OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF SOVIET COMMUNIST PARTY AND SUPREME SOVIET COUNCIL OF SOVIET UNION AND SOVIET PEOPLE, AND ON BEHALF OF OURSELVES PERSONALLY, WE SEND YOU, COMRAD HAFEZ AL-ASAD, AND FRIENDLY SYRIAN PEOPLE, OUR SINCERE CONGRATULATIONS AND BEST WISHES, WISHING PEOPLE OF SYRIA SUCCESS IN STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM AND REACTION TO FULFILL TASKS ENTRUSTED THEM IN ORDER TO IMPLEMENT PROGRESSIVE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATIONS AND TO ESTABLISH FIRM AND JUST ME PEACE. WE VOICE OUR HOPE THAT RELATIONS OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES WILL PROGRESSIVELY DEVELOP IN INTEREST OF PEACE AND SOCIAL PROGRESS."

3. FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL BY MAHMUD KAMIL SAME DAY ON ASAD TRIP OPINED THAT, "IN ADDITION TO IMPORTANT POLITICAL QUESTIONS WHICH WILL UNDOUBTEDLY FIGURE PROMINENTLY IN ASAD'S TALKS WITH SOVIET LEADERS, SYRO-SOVIET RELATIONS CONSTITUTE TOPIC OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE." HE NOTED THAT INCREASED SOVIET SUPPORT FOR ARAB CAUSE AND COOPERATION WITH SYRIA

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WOULD STRENGTHEN "ARAB LIBERATION MOVEMENT." HE CONCLUDED WITH EXPRESSION OF HOPE THAT VISIT WOULD BRING "FRUITFUL RESULTS AFFECTING LIBERATION OF OCCUPIED LANDS AND RECOVERY OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS."

4. APRIL 17 DAMASCUS RADIO ANNOUNCED THAT DELEGATION ACCOMPANYING ASAD WOULD INCLUDE: DEPPRIMIN AND FONMIN KHADDAM, DEPPRIMIN FOR ECON AFFAIRS SHAYYA, BAATH PARTY DEPSECGEN AHMAR, BAATH REGIONAL COMMAND MEMBER MAHMUD HADID, EUPHRATES DAM MIN KAHHALAH, COMMUNICATIONS MIN SIBAI, MIN STATE FOR PLANNING HAWRANIYAH, AND POLITICAL COUNSELOR DAOUDI. SYRIAN AMBASSADOR IN MOSCOW JABR AL-KAFRI WILL JOIN DELEGATION IN MOSCOW.

5. COMMENT: MEDIA HAD STUDIOUSLY REFRAINED FROM MENTIONING VISIT DURING PREPARATORY PERIOD BEFORE VISIT, BUT IN FEW DAYS PRIOR TO ASAD'S DEPARTURE MEDIA SUDDENLY FOCUSED ON SYRO-SOVIET TIES. WE NOTE THAT MUCH OF THE REPORTING CONSISTED OF REPUBLICATION OF MATERIAL ORIGINATING IN

SOVIET UNION, WHEREAS SYRIAN CONTRIBUTION
TO MEDIA OUTPUT WAS LIMITED TO REITERATION OF GENERALITIES
BY COLUMNIST KAMIL, ANNOUNCEMENT OF VISIT AND LISTING
OF DELEGATION MEMBERS. DETAILS OF SOVIET ASSISTANCE
PROGRAMS IN SYRIA, PUBLISHED BY TASS IN MOSCOW APRIL 15,
WERE NOT REPRINTED IN SYRIAN PRESS.
PELLETREAU

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 18-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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